



AQUESTT

for Nebraska

D R A F T

Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow

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Since 1953, the State Board of Education, acting as a unit, shall be the policy-forming, planning, and evaluative body for the state school program (Neb. Rev. Stat. Section 79-301-(2)). Although the Nebraska Legislature has over the past sixty years set forth numerous duties for the State Board to act, it is still the responsibility of the State Board of Education to take each of those prescribed duties and set forth policy, planning and evaluation systems to ensure that Nebraska's school program is the best it can be. Nebraska State Board Policy G19, Standards, Assessment, and Accountability (SAA) Belief Statements adopted in 2012 and most recently LB 438, The Quality Education and Accountability Act, frame the foundation for the *Accountability of Quality Education System for Today and Tomorrow: A QuESTT for Nebraska!*

Building an Accountability System is literally, the least we can do. Building a system that supports every student, every day is far more than the minimums required by law. The State Board believes that the opportunity to integrate components of accountability, assessment, accreditation, career education, and data into a system of school improvement and support is imperative for the good of Nebraska students and for the state to have a vibrant and economically successful future. The State Board sets out to establish not only a vision for accountability but a vision for a Quality education system for generations to come.

The State Board believes that the people of Nebraska — through their Constitution, the Nebraska Legislature, the State Board of Education, the Commissioner of Education and policy makers — are responsible for the total design of this Education System. This Education System is certainly influenced by others including the Federal government, other state leaders, and local policy makers, however, we are convinced that it is only successfully implemented by those who drive the system including local boards of education, administrators, teachers, parents, communities, and students. This belief requires that we listen well, communicate better, and engage leaders and stakeholders across the state. We have that opportunity. We start that process with the charge given to us to build a meaningful accountability system.

AQuESTT for Nebraska to Lead!

The drivers for the development of this model included: fairness and sensitivity to change; transparency; ability to support school and district improvement and student achievement; multiple indicators derived from key tenets of successful schools and districts; incorporation of trend data; and grounded in student growth.

The following tables represent the framework of the new system of quality and accountability for Nebraska. This system exceeds the requirements in LB438 and aligns some of Nebraska's regulatory requirements under the umbrella of quality, accountability and school improvement. The system is designed to classify all schools and districts into one of four areas: Excellent, Great, Good, Needs Improvement/Priority. The classification system is designed around tenets including: College and Career Ready; Assessment; Positive Partnerships, Relationships, and Student Success; Educator Effectiveness; Transitions; and Equal Opportunities and Access.

The new classification system will also align with the accreditation of school districts and serves as a blueprint of continuous improvement for each school and each school district in Nebraska. Schools and districts will be classified and recognized annually. Schools and districts classified as Excellent and Great will be recognized by the State Board of Education. Any school or district falling into the classification of Needs Improvement will be required to submit an action plan to the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) that outlines the steps underway to make improvements. The three schools most in need of improvement will be designated as Priority Schools. Priority Schools will be required to work with an NDE intervention team to create an intervention plan. The Priority School intervention plan must be submitted to, and approved, by the State Board of Education.

The Six Tenets of AQuESTT

STUDENT SUCCESS AND ACCESS



Positive Partnerships, Relationships & Student Success

The State Board believes that student engagement through positive partnerships and relationships is fundamental to successful schools and districts. The State Board seeks to support schools and districts to implement best practices in student, family and community engagement to enhance educational experiences and opportunities.

Areas of Focus

- Individualized or Personalized Learning Plans
- Attendance and Participation
- Family Engagement
- Community and support services



Transitions

The State Board believes that quality educational opportunities focus on supports for students transitioning between grade levels, programs, schools, districts and ultimately college and careers.

Areas of Focus

- Early Childhood-Elementary
- Elementary-Middle School
- Middle School-High School
- High School-Post High School



Educational Opportunities and Access

The State Board believes that all students should have access to comprehensive instructional opportunities to be prepared for postsecondary education and career goals.

Areas of Focus

- Early Childhood Education
- Comprehensive Learning Opportunities
- Expanded Learning Opportunities
- Blended Learning Opportunities

TEACHING AND LEARNING



College & Career Ready

The State Board of Education believes that every student upon completion of secondary education shall be prepared for postsecondary educational opportunities and to pursue their career goals.

Areas of Focus

- Rigorous College & Career Ready Standards for All Content Areas
- Technological & Digital Readiness
- Support for Career Awareness and Career/College Goals



Assessment

The State Board believes the results of multiple assessment sources (national, state, and classroom-based) should be used to measure student achievement of college and career ready standards, and be used as an integral part of the instructional process.

Areas of Focus

- Individualized/Adaptive Assessments
- Classroom Based Assessments
- State Assessments
- National/International Assessments



Educator Effectiveness

The State Board believes that students should be surrounded by effective educators throughout their learning experiences such that schools and districts develop effective teachers and leaders who establish a culture of success.

Areas of Focus

- Nebraska Teacher & Principal Performance Framework
- Professional Development
- Building Leadership Supports
- Effective Local Policy Makers & Superintendents